celebrating the joys of submission!

radiance

LIVING AND LOVING THE YOUNG MUSLIM LIFESTYLE

PEEK INSIDE

The Brightest Career Choice

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SNEAK A PEEK

Spiritual Heart Diseases

Assalam u Aleykum dear readers,

Do you often feel sad, bored, and lonely? Really? How can you be sure? Or, to be direct, let me ask you this instead: do you suffer from jealousy, a broken heart, hate or gossip? If one or all of these apply to you then hold on to your jaw for it's about to drop. Offensive as it may sound, but for those of us guilty of having the above-mentioned problems, the real problem lies with our Imaan, and we are a victim of SHD aka Spiritual Heart Diseases.

If we believe in Allah ﷻ and we have trust in Him, then logically speaking, feeling depressed can't ensue as that is a sign of a dead heart. One of the first things the Quran does is define three types of people: the *Mu'minun* (believers), the *Kafirun* (disbelievers), and the *Munafiqun* (hypocrites). The *Mu'minun* are people whose hearts are alive while the *Kafirun* are those whose hearts are dead. The hypocrites are people who have a disease or a sickness in their hearts. At-Tirmidhi relates on the authority of Ibn 'Umar:

"Do not talk excessively without remembering Allah, because such excessive talk without the mention of Allâh causes the heart to harden, and the person furthest from Allah is a person with a hard heart." (Tirmdihi).

Talking excessively, backbiting, malice, anger, pride, envy are all diseases of the heart, working in full force to weaken our spiritual well-being. So let's pick gear and get started in treating our hearts from these SHD:

Patient: The Ummah

Diagnosis: SHD (spiritual heart diseases)

Prescription: Recognising that we are in control of our hearts and minds. For isn't it that when we think of some joke, we find ourselves laughing? While when we think about a tragedy, we find our heart growing heavy. None of these two situations exist in reality right now, but our brain assumes they do. So if we can control our imagination, we can control those negative thoughts that strike us day in and day out, and then we can spend our whole life smiling while others wonder how we do that!

We can also always see to the brighter side of things that disturb us and if we still can't see anything good about them, then it is an opportunity for us to gain *ajr* through practicing *sabr* and *tawakkal*. Remember Allah as our greatest helper in every situation. It does great good assigning specific *dhikrs* for every situation, for example, we can read Surah Al-Ikhlaas when angry and we can train ourselves to read *astaghfaar* when distressed or sick.

Suffering from the diseases of the heart is normal but we surely need to treat them. Or else we will become of those who turn their faults into habits. So will we seek the cure to our SHD? Will we take the divine prescription, that is guaranteed to strengthen us as no antibiotic or steroid ever could? Thus starting from this issue of Radiance we have a series on spiritual illnesses in our 'Beam 'n' Bloom' section. This time let's find out about the deadly, dreadful disease of Pride.

Best of all, stay in regular consultation with the doctors of the heart - our learned Ulema. Review this prescription frequently and adjust incrementally to strengthen immunity against diseases of the heart. Take for life!

Wsalam,

Bint Zahid
Editor.radiance@gmail.com

Bint Saleem Hasan from Jamiatul Abrar Lilbanaat describes her exciting journey into the beautiful world of Sacred Islamic Learning

The Brightest Career Choice

August 15, 2012

Dear Diary, I just don't know why things are taking such a bad turn! I can't even tell it to anybody but I can always relate it all to you, dear dairy. After all, my pride shatters when it comes to writing in you.

I guess even you will be shedding tears of ink when I tell you this. Mom is adamant on sending me to Madressah! I mean, like please! There is something called freedom of social life. Why am I, of all the siblings, being denied of this right? Ughhh. I feel so frustrated. But I don't care, even I will stay firm on selecting a nice college and a bright career for my future. Okay fine, I admit, Madressah is not so bad. Actually, if I look at it from a different perspective, it's kind of interesting, but I am in NO way going to let myself be an ignorant jerk who has studied till grade 10 only! Give me a break! I feel so less educated; I'll go in this line once I'm finished with all my studies. But not so soon. I'm not at all prepared for it. You agree with me, right diary? Of course you do.

August 16, 2012

I want to pound my head on the wall! I talked to mom about my choice. Not rudely, mind you, but sort of firmly, as if not asking her for approval rather just announcing my decision. Let me tell you this, maybe I think it went all nice cause my mom just shrugged sadly and said, "Fine, do whatever you want. It was just my wish to present my children for the service of Allah's Deen. But I can't force you."

And then she wouldn't talk about it again and buried her head in her Quran. But that is not how I want it to be! I feel so guilty for making mom sad. I can never do what I want if I have mom's displeasure looming in front of me. My conscience kept on stabbing me all the way, reproaching me for my choice. It just feels like yesterday when I was so happy about getting a nice percentage. But...all in vain.*pout*

I'm so confused, my mind is spinning. My life is totally craving for higher studies, but here I am stuck with this pleasing-my-mom ordeal. Anyways, wish me luck. I am about to make my final decision.

August 19, 2012

Guess what? I made it! I made it! I made my decision. It's not really what I wanted but my heart is not crying over it now, for the person who advised me also comforted me immensely. You'll be surprised to hear who that person was. She was no else but my own mommy! Hold on a minute; don't roll your eyes, ok. Let me tell you how the whole story went. I had just finished my Maghrib prayers and I guess I had never felt as worn out as I felt then. My mom obviously couldn't resist herself when she saw me

with such a long face.

"What's wrong, dear? Why do you look so troubled lately?" She said to me and I could see that she was genuinely concerned. I burst into tears. I was so overwhelmed by the burden of choosing between two things and making such a serious decision. I cried very hard. Anyway, my mom didn't say anything at first but gently patted my back. So once I was done crying I let my feelings out.

"Mom, I'm so very tired of this. I just can't decide whether to take admission in a Madressah or in a college. Taking admission in a college will displease you and Madressah will displease me. I feel so confused," I said wiping my tears.

Seriously diary, I just LOVE my mom. It was after that outburst that she started to talk and I found myself listening to her. "You are the most gifted from all my children, you know. That is why I wanted to make the brightest of my children a Sadqa-e-Jariya for myself. You are very special. I always knew that Allah ﷻ had chosen you, ever since you were young. It was in such a young age that you started wearing Hijab without even me needing to reprimand you. I knew Allah would take some great work from you when you get older." She was constantly praising me. Maybe it was to lift my spirits and I had to admit, she was doing a pretty good job at it. It was already beginning to prevail over my dampened mood.

"My darling daughter, you will please me so much if you take admission in a Madressah. Allah ﷻ also loves and helps the person who strives in His path. You will get something much better than studying in a college. You will get loving teachers, a religious environment and most of all - Allah ﷻ will bless you with the Knowledge of His Deen! Can you believe that? Allah ﷻ is pulling you towards Himself! What can be greater than that?" This was enough for me or should I say, more than enough for me.

I have finally made a decision. So, yes. Madressah it is. I hope I fit in nicely there. I'm quite nervous.

August 05, 2013

Okay, first of all, I am very sorry that I ignored you for so long. I became a Madressah student you see. I didn't have time. But today I have opened you up to tell you some great news. I have completed the first year of my Madressah! No one can be happier than me in this whole wide world! And I have to let you in to a secret. Well, it was a secret for the first few days of Madressah, it's not a secret anymore. I told everyone about it but unfortunately, I forgot you. Here it is; I JUST LOVE my Madressah! I can just sit there for hours on end and never feel bored. Its environment, its rooms, its atmosphere, every single thing has such peace within itself. My heart starts longing for it as soon as I reach home. I got along so nicely, it's sometimes hard to believe, that I, who at first was unable to even read the names of the books, completed one whole year with Allah's help! The teachers were like spiritual mothers for the students, moulding our character and personalities in an amazing manner.

It was just yesterday when I told mom how my heart aches for Madressah and how I wish my next year would start already. My mom then teased me by reminding me of my earlier vision and I couldn't fathom that how silly I was then to be opting for Dunya over Deen. Seriously, I couldn't even in my wildest dream have thought that Allah would guide me to such a beautiful destination. Surely no institution can ever compete with a Madressah and how I thank Allah ﷻ, for if it wasn't for Allah's Will, I wouldn't have been granted this great wealth of Islamic learning

1. On which side did Japan fight in the First World War?
   - None, it was neutral
   - With the United Kingdom against Germany
   - With Germany against the United Kingdom
   - Against Russia, but on its own

2. How many of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World still exist?
   - 3
   - 2
   - 1
   - 0

3. The oldest working post office, established in1712, is in:
   - Rome
   - Makkah
   - Scotland
   - Bukhara

4. Which Mathematician is famous for making great advances in Algebra?
   - Al-Bataani
   - Al-Khwarizami
   - Al-Beruni
   - Ibn Khaldun

GK QUIZ TIME

Let's check out how well we know the world we live in.

5. What dairy product is fermented milk?
   - Cheese
   - Yogurt
   - Butter
   - Lassi

6. The largest airport in the world is the:
   - Newyork International Airport
   - Madrid International Airport
   - King Khalid International Airport, Saudi Arabia.
   - Shinghai International Airport

7. Who designed a helicopter, submarine, parachute and ammunition ignitor about 500 years ago?
   - Leonardo da Vinci
   - Albert Einstein
   - The Wright brothers
   - Galileo

8. What was the name of Istanbul before its capture by the Turks?
   - Byzance
   - Adrienople
   - Nicosia
   - Constantinople

Answers

1) With the United Kingdom against Germany
2) 1
3) Scotland
4) Al-Khwarizami
5) Yogurt
6) King Khalid International Airport, Saudi Arabia
7) Leonardo da Vinci
8) Constantinople

Buying love

A story by **Hajra Salman Omar** portraying how they are just the little things that can easily buy us love

"Cough, cough!" The voice reached her ears again.

Hania tried to shut the voice by tightening the pillow around her ears, but the tear-soaked pillow wasn't comforting Hania much.

"Face it, Hania, your father is seriously ill and you can do nothing about it!" she whispered fiercely to herself.

She looked up to see if her younger sister Zainab was also wide awake like her, but to her relief Zainab's eyes were closed and her breathing was steady. She didn't want Zainab to start losing her good night sleeps too.

Her mother's old cell phone buzzed and she pulled it out of her draw to check the text message. She didn't have her own phone so her mother let her use it sometimes. It was her school friend, Aena.

"Sorry Hania, I did not reply to your last message. I was out shopping. Lifestyle is having a grand sale and everything is almost free."

"That's great!" Hania typed quickly.

"Want to go over to Lifestyle with me tomorrow?"

"I don't know. I will talk to you tomorrow. Have a good night."

And with that, she forced herself to sleep.

The next morning Hania felt much better. She went straight to her parents' room.

"Assalamualeykum Ami, Abu!"

"Hey, where are they?" she asked Zainab on not finding her parents in their room.

"Don't be worried. Mom has just taken Abu to Dr. Inayat. She wants to request him one last time to reduce the fee."

"Oh!" Hania said softly.

Zainab often acted more mature and older than Hania for which Hania was very grateful. A positive-thinking and straightforward sister was just what she needed in

these times, since her father had a lung infection and recently his condition had worsened, making him more sick than ever with his unbearable coughs.

One night when the coughs got uncontrollable as Hania's father could not even breath, they took him to the hospital in emergency and found out that it was linked to some hard-to-pronounce disease which her father had in his spleen.

Hania tried to shake off the gloomy-doomy feeling as she informed Zainab, "Aena is coming today."

"Are you going to talk to her about the fee?" Zainab asked.

"I can't," Hania said somberly.

Aena's father was a very close friend of Dr. Inayat and Zainab wanted Hania to ask Aena if her father could talk his friend into reducing the fee.

"Friends are those with whom you can share everything Hania. Without hesitation." Zainab had added in an elderly tone.

But Hania couldn't tell Zainab that she had already asked Aena and Aena had refused to

talk to her dad, saying that her father was in an important business meeting abroad.

Hania's parents finally returned from the hospital.

"I hope you are feeling better," Hania said, gripping her father's hand tightly.

"I am absolutely fine," her father reassured her but the look on her mother's face told her that the doctor had refused to reduce the fee.

The bell rang. "Assalamualeykum!" Aena sing songed. With her left hand she was holding an enormous bouquet and what looked like a box of chocolates while in her other hand was a shopping bag with "*Life-style*" written in embossed glitter printing.

" Walekum Assalam Aena, what's all this?" Hania asked in a surprised tone.

"Ask me in first, won't you?" Aena said in an awfully cheerful voice.

"These flowers are for your family and chocolates are only and only for my best friend," Aena hugged her tightly.

"Jazakillah Aena!" Hania stammered.

"And in this bag is what I bought; I wanted to show you," Aena said turning over the bag and spilling out beautiful little things: a tiny sequined mirror, tiny table clock with glittering stones, antique candle with silver metal zig-zags and a mini hair brush having a purple butterfly embossed with pearly wings.

Aena would have bought love if buying love was possible in the world.

"Don't you love these?" Aena squealed.

"They are beautiful little things..." Hania murmured forgetting everything as she stroked the tiny lovely objects.

"They are for you," Aena said abruptly.

"No. I can't have these expensive things!" Hania refused.

They were very unique but she didn't need them. What use would they be of if she wouldn't have her father one day? And she knew why Aena was gifting her those things. Aena wanted her to feel loved. Her father usually stayed in America while the mother was too busy in her own job, leaving Aena under the care of an old maid. Aena would have bought love if buying love was possible in the world.

"You must have them."

"I love you Aena, whether you give me gifts or not, whether you come to visit my sick father or not," Hania said and deciding it was now or never, continued, "Aena, could you... umm talk to your dad again... I am sorry but I hope you can talk to him..." Hania was unable to complete her request as tears filled her eyes and her throat tightened.

"Oh Hania! I absolutely forgot. I'll talk to my father right away... how silly and careless of me to forget to talk to him about such an important issue. He just came back this morning. He must be tired but I am sure he can find enough time....." Aena talked on and on and Hania felt her heart would burst with the beautiful little feelings that were swelling inside it, she fervently watched Aena dial her father's number.

While Aena talked to her father, Hania sat down on the prayer-mat to pray. She squeezed her eyes tightly as Aena placed a hand on her shoulder.

"Hania... Dr. Inayat has agreed!" Hearing these words Hania fell in Sajdah; she needed to thank Allah سبحانه وتعالى first and then tell the good news to her family.

Later, Aena watched the happy family as her own eyes filled with tears of happiness. Aena had just bought love for them, which in return, made her feel loved too●

SCREWS 'N' BOLTS

RIDDLES

1

If you throw me from the window,
I will leave a grieving wife.
Bring me back, but in the door, and
You'll see someone giving life!
What am I?

2

I am something that follows you wherever you go.
I normally come in pairs.
I get messed up by water, wind, and rain.
What am I?

3

My first is in beauty, but not teary.
My second is in flutter, but not reflect.
My third is in petal but not leaf.
My fourth is in tulip, but not pail.
My fifth is in elf, but not fairy.
My sixth is in rose, but not lose.
My seventh is in flower, but not tower.
My eighth is in leaf but not fear.
My ninth is in youth but not truth.
What am I?

4

You can consider me a royal
For I rest upon a throne
But leave it I must
If something goes wrong.
A careful eye
I must have
Upon those who lay before me.

Answers

1) The letter 'n'.
wiNdow - widow
door–donor
2) Footprint
3) Butterfly
4) A lifeguard

SCIENCE NUGGET

What causes chill bumps on our skin?

Chill bumps—some people call them goose pimples—happen to everyone. They are little raised bumpy places on your skin that get there when your skin is cold and when anyone of us gets scared. This is a reflex action, one of the automatic actions your body does without thinking by your brain. In an animal with fur this helps to raise each of its hairs to fluff up its fur. Fluffed-up fur is a better insulator and helps keep the animal warm. For you it doesn't do much good. But it certainly is not anything to worry about either.

The Carpenter

A highly skilled carpenter who had grown old was ready to retire. He told his employer-contractor of his plans to leave the house building business and live a more leisurely life with his family. He would miss the paycheck, but he needed to retire.

The employer was sorry to see his good worker go and asked if he could build just one more house as a personal favour. The carpenter agreed to this proposal but made sure that this will be his last project. Being in a mood to retire, the carpenter was not paying much attention to building this house. His heart was not in his work. He resorted to poor workmanship and used inferior materials. It was an unfortunate way to end his career.

When the job was done, the carpenter called his employer and showed him the house. The employer handed over some papers and the front door key to the carpenter and said, "This is your house, my gift to you."

The carpenter was in a shock! What a shame! If he had only known that he was building his own house, he would have made it better than any other house that he ever built!

Our situation can be compared to this carpenter. Allah Taa'la has sent us to this world to build our homes in Paradise by obeying His commands. Now, we have to decide how well we wish to build the homes where we will live forever.

story

Who is She?

Part 2 of 2

So ordinary yet truly amazing! **Bint Aftab** tells an enlightening story of a young Muslim and the effective habits that she fabulously exhibits wherever she treads

"*Jazakillah*, aunty, but if you wouldn't mind I'd like to keep them company," she gestured further towards the back of the hall, "I still haven't met any of them."

"Dear, you don't need to sit with the maids and servants. You can find another empty table - you'll look odd, and make a bad impression."

(I totally agreed! With her dressing, she would seem like a servant girl too!)

"But it really makes them happy if someone greets them and gives them company despite knowing their financial position."

Then she walked towards the table where the maids and lower-class women sat. She greeted each one of them like she had greeted all the other women—as if there was no difference between an industrialist's wife and a gardener's daughter! Then, to my immense surprise, she sat down amongst a bunch of young maids—one of which was my own—and started talking to them in a low voice.

That was another thing. She hadn't talked in a loud voice since I had seen her, and that was unusual too.

While everyone rushed to the banquet tables once dinner started, she sat with her table-fellows, waiting the rush out with them. Once they stood up, she followed them to the banquet, and like them, didn't overly stuff her plate. A little rice, a little gravy, a quarter roti, a piece of chicken and one samosa were all she took.

Then she went back to the table where a few more maids had joined. After putting down her plate and drink, she made room for them all and then sat down herself. Only after everyone was seated at the table did she start eating—and that too after saying, "Bismillahi Wa'ala Barakatillah" loudly enough for people at the nearby tables to hear and for some people to murmur the same - it wouldn't do to be seen as worldly and unreligious, so I murmured it too.

She passed a smile when she saw that at least everyone at her table had followed her lead, and then started eating the rice—with her hand!

I went and checked at the crockery stall, but contrary to my expectations (I had been preparing my scathing remarks to the host at having run out of crockery), there were plenty of spoons of different sizes.

When I went back to my place at the table beside hers, I noticed one of her table-fellows was gesturing to her own spoon and talking to her. With a smile, the girl shook her head.

I leaned closer to hear, "It's a Sunnah to eat with the hand, baji."

(Baji! Why, the table-

fellow couldn't have been more than fifteen! And here she was, talking to even the preteens with the 'Aap' that we sometimes didn't even address our elders with).

After polishing off the rice expertly until there was not a grain of rice left on her plate, she started eating the chicken. She finished that, too, until there was not the tiniest piece of chicken left on the bone (ew! There's blood on the non-white part of cooked chicken!), ate the one-bite samosa in two bites so that her mouth wasn't bulging (what's the use of eating a one-bite samosa then?) and then by the time she was finished with the gravy and roti, her plate looked so clean it was as if no one had ever eaten on it (she could have just gotten more if she was that hungry).

Once she was finished with all that, she stood up to go and put her plate with all the other dirty dishes (there were hardly any plates at all there; besides, she was sitting with so many maids, why didn't she just leave it for them to pick up?). She came back and told her table-fellows that she was "going to go to put on her burqa, since the men would be coming in soon, and she wanted to leave before then."

Even then, after saying "Assalamu Aleykum" once at the table after she'd put on a completely plain, baggy black burqa, dupatta, gloves and niqab with such expertise that I hadn't been able to get a glimpse of her hair colour and length or her physique (and I'd been trying my best!), by the time that she started towards the exit, the men were already entering.

While I would have used the opportunity to look around eagerly and curiously, and scrutinise the bridegroom for commenting upon later, she gazed at the ground modestly and stuck to the wall until all men had passed. It was then that she approached the guy standing at a side of the entrance.

He was tall with a long beard and his kurta baggy enough to hide his physique, though he looked a little thin. His shalwar seemed two sizes too short, since it was at least three inches higher than his ankle. (Kurta!? It was a walima, everyone was wearing dinner suits, and he didn't even wear a waist-coat that the very old people wore! And what was with the too-short shalwar?).

The two walked gracefully out of the hall.

I followed them outside, curious about their means of transport (though she hadn't given anything away, I expected her to leave in a rickshaw, motorbike, taxi or even on foot; she had to be one of the lesser folk!).

But the car they were approaching was a sleek BMW. (Oh! He must be the chauffeur then! Whew...)

But, once again choking my expectations with their bare hands and then stuffing them down the gutter, the guy opened the front door for her and then got into the driving seat. He started the car, and they were off at a speed I expected from guys dressed in jeans and bright t-shirts.

(OH MY GOD! No... no way! She... she just went away in a BMW! She had to have been rich. But... she acted like you know what! This surprised me more than anything else... a BMW?... wow... man... they have to be the oddest pair I have ever seen).

They were the only pair that dressed like Muslims. You needn't ask them their names or their religious identity, you need only look at them once. You never have to ask a true Muslim about his religion. Even in foreign places, his dress code and his manners give him away

poetic rush

Happy being just me

by Hafsa Kamal

I emerged from my fantasy of skinny body frame and perfect hair
To a reality where I smile at the mirror happy that I no longer care
I emerged from being a girl who wanted to resemble a celebrity
To being a girl who is now happy being just me
I stood on the weighing machine hoping I'd lose a few
But now I do it to keep myself healthy not cute
I changed my perspective from struggling to attain perfection
To one where I prefer creating possibilities and making a difference
I don't want to run after praises on my beauty when I can get it for my personality
I don't want to compete in a label game where all end up losing their originality
I'm changing that media brainwashed person who wanted a size two body
To a person who writes and works to increase the size of her mental facility
I want to be beautiful but not just on the outside
I want to be an intellectual and a pious female
With equally sincere and intellectual friends on my side
I don't want boys to run after me for what I look like
I cloak myself to avoid their leers and my Allah knows it's best for me
For all my feminist notions I don't feel oppressed I feel free
I feel like a pure pearl, a respected human being
I no longer feel like I have to fit in to the fad for perfect figure and glossy hair pretense
Since I have foregone the worldly rage for outward perfection that only triggered incense
I let go of it since it never made me feel happy about myself, I adopt the Muslim identity instead
And now I see females pitying my veiled face and wonder what goes on in my covered head
To all those of you who wonder what a Muslim girl feels- I remember living a life like you do now
And all I can say is Alhamdulillah my hijab is the reason I've smoothened my brow
It is the reason I don't have to pretend I'm someone I'm not and will never be
And for the first time since I started veil I look at the mirror happy being just me.

Tales in the library

“These are very strong accusations! Are you sure, Danish?” the librarian asked.

“Yes, I’m positive. Yesterday, I saw Salman put one of these,” Danish held up a small envelope containing white powder, “between the X and Y volumes of the Encyclopedia. After he left, a big guy in a leather jacket came in and took the envelope out and put money in. Today, after Salman came, I intercepted the envelope.”
“What do you have against Salman? You obviously want to get him in trouble.”
How did the librarian know Danish was lying?

Hint
When was the last that you had a look at an encyclopedia.

The Testimony

Old Mr. Hameed was found dead in his study by Mr. Aqeel. Mr. Aqeel recounted his dismal discovery to the police. “I was walking by Mr. Hameed’s house when I thought I would just pop in for a visit. I noticed his study light was on, thus I decided to peek in from the outside to see if he was in there. There was frost on the window, so I had to wipe it away to see inside. That is when I saw his body. So I kicked in the front door to confirm my suspicions of foul play. I called the police immediately afterwards.”
The officer immediately arrested Mr. Aqeel for the murder of Mr. Hameed.

Hint
His testimony gave it away.

Answers

The X and Y volumes of the library’s encyclopedia are together in one book, a common practice; therefore he couldn’t have put anything between them.

Frost forms on the inside of the window, not the outside. So Mr. Aqeel could not have wiped it off to discover Mr. Hameed’s body.

Me, myself & I

Zawjah Zia shares terrific tips to help us discover within ourselves, as well as cure from our hearts the deadly disease of pride.

Tania was not in the best of moods. She was restless and depressed; her heart felt like a heavy load in her chest. There was a certain cause for this state of hers for sure. Rimlah, her classmate, was having a bash at her place and she had invited every 'important' person BUT Tania. The thought that she had been ignored was eating up Tania. 'How could she not invite me?' She could find no sane answer to that question. All the answers that she tried to come up with lead her to more and more rage. That's it; she decided. She was going to teach Rimlah a lesson; she would have to pay for inflicting this 'insult' upon Tania.

So the next day at school, Tania did a perfect job tormenting Rimlah. For once, she didn't reply to her salaam, and then at the café, she purposely pushed her to make her drop her lunch-tray and then passed it with an oops-giggle-sorry act. But much as Tania yearned, all of her mean gestures failed to give her the satisfaction she desired. So Tania started working on uglier lines............

Where the common-place diagnosis of Tania's condition could be big-headed-ness, self-centered-ness or ego-inflation etc, a deeper look would lead one to a single basic ailment that causes all of the afore-mentioned illnesses, aka, Pride (Takabbur).

Two common definitions of Takabbur would be, 'to think big of oneself' and 'to regard oneself as better than others in any attribute'. Be it worldly or religious, Takabbur is such a sneaky trait that it can seep into every human emotion. What is even scarier is that a proud person can seldom ever bring him/her self to admit that he/she has it. So, all of us are at a constant risk of suffering from pride unknowingly. Therefore, let us check ourselves! I shall pose to you a few simple questions and answering them should lead you to your self-diagnosis.

You must have something that you think makes you stand out from the crowd; Remarkable academics, fluent accent, a knack for social work, good looks, outstanding sense of humour, an elite family background, amicable fashion-sense and taste, impressive general knowledge, money and possessions, enviable piety and religiosity, awesome sports or even an exclusive collection of celebrity autographs or something even more mundane? How do you carry that supposedly special attribute of yours?

Diagnosing the sickness

-Do you have an 'I am better than so and so regarding this' feeling?
-Do you have an 'I am the best when it comes to this' feeling?
-Do you have a 'who could ever beat me at this' feeling?
-Do you spend time feeling great about your qualities but fail to see your flaws whereas others' flaws seem glaring to you?
-Do you dislike advice or constructive criticism?
-Do you often use terms like my feelings, my emotions, my preferences, my life, my space, my decisions---and are usually inconsiderate of the feelings, emotions, preferences, life, space and decisions of others?
-Do you display your vanity and feel that if others are not impressed by you or don't give you due importance then they don't really know you?
-Do you dislike if you ever have to do some low level work (taking out the garbage for example) and think it's beneath your stature?

If you don't have the above, then Kudos to you because you don't seemingly have pride, but, if you do have any or all of the above, then the red-flag goes up for you but not without a good news; Congratulations, you are human!

Someone might ask, if it is so human then why is it so bad? So it would be wise to understand why.

Pride is a heart-sealer. Allah ﷻ says in the Quran that, *"...Allah seals the heart of every arrogant tyrant"*. (Al-Momin: 35)

What happens to something that is sealed or blocked? For one thing, it becomes hard.

Secondly, then nothing can go in or come out of it. Imagine your heart to be caged in an air-tight jar! What would happen then? The inflow and outflow of blood would stop; the heart would suffocate, wilt, weaken and finally die. That's the effect that pride has on the spirituality of our hearts. It hardens and seals the heart, it blocks any goodness from entering the heart, it disallows the heart to emit anything good, it weakens the heart so much that the heart finally gives up on its life; its natural goodness and becomes a dead heart; hopeless, cureless and devoid of all good. How sad and unfortunate would it be to have such a heart!

So what to do? If I don't want a dead heart, I know that I must fight pride out of my heart. Now I only need to know how! Here are a few useful and tested tips for me and you:

What am I?

Our big-wide world; our earth---imagine the earth as a tennis ball (or even a smaller ball) among this huge universe created by Allah ﷻ. Now imagine all the people, places, countries and oceans on that ball, and then try to imagine yourself among them. Where are you? Can you find yourself? Or for that matter, what are you? A speck of dust or a molecule maybe?

Now compare your oh-so-special attributes and attitudes with your new-found stature and you'll find yourself laughing at your own foolishness really!

Where did I get it from?

Whatever attribute, thing or feeling that brings pride in my heart needs to be held against this question. Then if I feel that I am the one who has created that thing in me then my pride is justified. But when experienced in reality, I'll find that I could have never ever got it if it was not due to the mercy of Allah ﷻ, and then all my reasons

Cures

Practice makes a man (realise that he is not) perfect.
Here are a few very useful habits that we can inculcate in order to stay away from pride:

- Talk less, listen more. Whenever you are tempted to start narrating amazing stories about yourself, remind yourself that everyone loves the conversation to go around him the way you want it to go around yourself. So use 'I', 'Me' and 'My' very very carefully. This little effort to change the way we speak induces remarkably positive effects on us to see to our rebellious self-centeredness.
- Do acts of humility openly. Try to always be the first to say Salaam to everyone you meet, also, never ever ignore anyone's Salaam. Drop the pretense of vanity and be as natural and simple as possible. Make the lack of noticeable possessions (fancy clothes, handbags and other accessories) as your grooming tool. Sometimes, remaining unnoticed is all that we require to keep a check on our pride.
- Appreciate the qualities of others and be always sure that there are a lot of people better than you. Especially, treat those that you view as inferior to you with deliberate respect.
- Make lots of Dua for yourself. Allah ﷻ knows what is in your heart. Present your yearning to get rid of pride to Allah ﷻ and He'll surely take care of it Insha'Allah.

to boast about it would go down the drain. How nonsensical is it of me to be proud about something I have no power over; it's there because Allah ﷾ wants it to be there and He can take it away anytime that He wills. So what am I blabbering about?

History makes me wise:

Our beautiful Quran is full of stories for us to take lessons from. Then we have stories from the lives of the Sahabah and our pious predecessors too. Reading these stories, one naturally compares him/her self with people who were created by Allah ﷾ as role-models for us. This little exercise does wonders to keep a person grounded and down-to-earth in the real sense of the meaning.

Plus, history also fetches for us evidences of the dire ends of those who have had pride in the past. We find out that the one who said, 'I am better than him' was Satan, the one who said, 'I'm the best' was Pharaoh and the ones who said 'who could ever beat us' were the nation of Aa'd---and their miserable ends are not secrets, you know!

Takabbur = No love from Allah ﷾ = No Jannah:

It's very important to remember that:

Allah ﷾ says in the Quran: *"Allah does not love the arrogant and boasting ones."* (Luqman: 18)

Our Prophet ﷺ has told us in a Hadees-e-Qudsi that Allah ﷾ says, *"Pride is My shawl and Greatness is My garment. Whoever tries to take away any of them from me, I will put them in Fire."*

Keeping the above in mind, it would also be vital to know that if Allah ﷾ so dislikes arrogance, how would He allow anyone to get away with it?●

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life skills

The Adaab of talking

Compiled by Bint Younus

Speak in front of a person in a clear tone.

Call your elders with a title of respect, and not by their names.

Do not interrupt someone who is talking.

Don't boast about yourself.

Do not talk about unnecessary things.

Always think before you speak.

Do not say something which will hurt someone's feeling. Never be rude.

Keep your tone soft. One should never shout or raise their voice. However the tone should neither be too low that the one listening would have difficulty understanding what is being said.

Post two hours my teens

Mustafa GK muses over how it feels having to say goodbye to one's teenage forever.

I'm writing this article on a night that marked the end of my teenage. OMG! I can't believe it's over! Already? Can't I do anything to halt it? I sure have to do something to make it stop! Where's my time machine?

Sorry, I got a little carried away there but seriously, teenage was a very short span of time, and now I'm in my T-ages, a term I invented for the age that starts from twenty and ends at ninety-nine.

Anyways, I've just ended my teenage life, around two hours ago, and thought of sharing my views on it.

Teenage, when the entire world seems colourful. Friends, friends and friends! Your heart never fills with the limitless.... Never-ending and joyful company of friends. If that is in your stride, who bothers to go home? Wandering all around the city is what you want...... whole day, whole night. Parents seem to be the biggest enemy in the whole universe.

"Beta it's too late, when are you coming home? It's not safe outside at night these days.... Come home quickly......and...."

"Yeah...yeah I'm coming mom," phone disconnected! Who bothers to listen to what mom has to say.

And studies?? A huge barrier to your unlimited party-time. The ultimate fun-killers. Oh those times when you are most energised! When you wish to have great fun and enjoy-

ment, but, unfortunately you are tied up in chains by your books.

Most of you will agree and say 'yeah that's so right'. That is when your exams are going on, especially when there is a paper the very next day. Tell me honestly, how does it feel? (Dear nerds! The question is not for you all.)

I remember staying at a friend's house several times during exams for combined study. But honestly, who studies! At least I have never been successful at that. Then, you have a long list of events and plans that you have intended to ensue after you get rid of the dreaded exams. But I tell you what, soon after the exams all the excitement vanishes and all the planning disappears in thin air as if it had never been there. It is strange but true, I don't understand why this happens though.

Apart from all the fun that we run after during this age, it also appears to us that we'll stay young forever. Like I never thought that these seven years of my teenage will pass by so quickly. But time never stops for anyone.

I remember one of the Bayans of Hadhrat Hakeem Akhtar rahimahullah... he said that even a single breath you just took will not return till the Day of Judgment. Imagine! At another point he said that there are three stages in one's life... childhood, youth and old age. Then he asked which one is the best? Everyone answered, the middle one i.e. youth is the best! Then he asked that why is it that the best part of our lives is seldom spent for Allah ﷻ?

So is it that we waste the best time of our life in useless things and think that we will become religious when we will get seventy. And what about those who leave this world at a young age? There is surely no guarantee that we will live till our old age, or is there?

This teenage has to end one day and it will end some day that is not very far, trust me! Even this life won't last forever.

So how about acting a bit wisely? Why not make the fun, joy, excitement really last for an unending period of time? Everyone wishes that, right? Seven years of teenage is a very short period. Let's extend it to forever!!! And how is that going to happen? That's quite simple too! We can learn that through an example.

Suppose you are sent to a foreign country for seven years and are given a certain amount of money. You spend that money in every possible manner to enjoy those seven years. Or, there is a second option! Invest that money in some business and you will make a double or a triple of that. Bring it back to your home country and now you can enjoy it for many years to come. Our choice will tell how wise we are!

Our own country is Jannah (Insha'Allah) and this world is a foreign country. Our life is the money we are given. Now, we can either spend this money, this life, in fleeting baseless enjoyment of this world or we can invest it so that it bears profit that is many-folds and then the enjoyment can last forever in our home country that is Jannah where we will *insha'Allah* stay young forever.... The choice is absolutely ours!

Apart from all the fun that we run after during this age, it also appears to us that we'll stay young forever.

fresh pens

To boldly go...

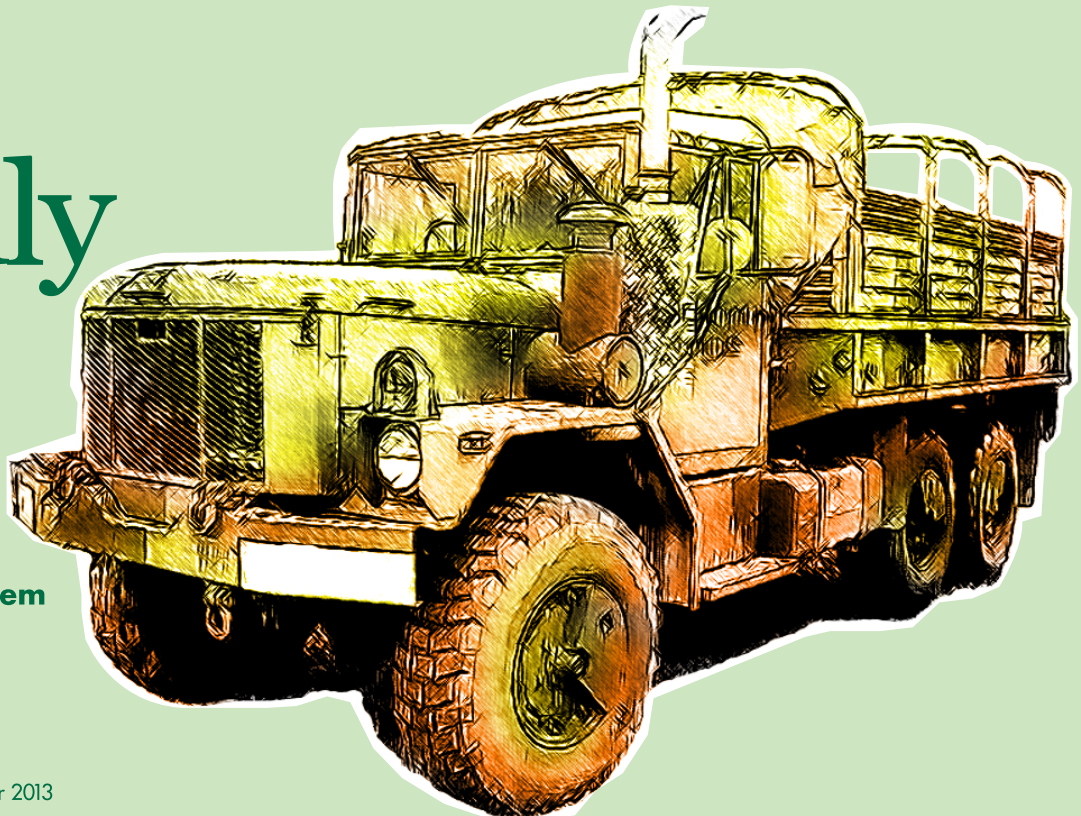
"To boldly go and face the danger...." was the aim of the to-be-Pakistanis, ".....to follow their destiny and claim their rightful country!"

During the creation of Pakistan, Muslims were brutally treated by the Hindus. Families were destroyed, looting and plundering was at a rise and injustice was touching the highest limits. The following story gives us a view of how one family bore the same brutality.

Just as she opened the door, Atiqa's mother walked in and gave her a warm hug as she had come to visit her after a long time. Atiqa was now married and had two children and she lived in a small village which was on the verge of destruction. There was always an anxiety of the Sikhs attacking the village. Whenever there was an imminent danger of an attack, all the women and children would gather on the roofs. The women would try to calm down the crying children and the men would guard their families. As soon as the mind-relieving news of safety would be heard, a streak of happiness would spread across the unfortunate faces. Atiqa and her mother, Sakina, were stuck in the same situation. They sat looking forlorn when, the good news came.

Sakina then rushed into her daughter's home and prepared some food for the family but just as they were about to take their first bites they heard that the Sikhs were attacking again and there was a great stampede outside. So they all hurried to a safe place. It was Arham, Sakina's eldest son, who had brought a truck for them to go to Pakistan. The truck driver looked very kind; he preferred that Arham should stay with the men and call another truck for them and that he would take the women and children to Pakistan.

In reality, the driver was a very clever man and he had convinced Arham very easily that he was a Muslim, but actually he was a Sikh! The perilous journey began but just as the driver changed the direction from the usual route, a boy in the truck named Tariq

by Fatimah Nadeem
Class 9
Springfield School

who knew the roads of the country very well, forced him to slow down. Tariq was anxious that they had been tricked and was worrying about the safety of everyone. He asked the driver where he was taking them. The driver sniggered and answered, “When we will reach there you will know!”

The women started crying and the children shrieked fearfully, but nothing of this made the hard-hearted man feel pity for the Muslims aboard. He stopped at an isolated place and when he whistled, six more Sikhs came out of their hiding places. They had huge spears, daggers, shotguns and large swords... and their motive was to kill!

The brutal men targeted infants and children first, sadly including Atiqa‘s sons too. They would kill some instantly and wound others mercilessly and leave them to die a painful death. Sakina felt that death was near and she and a couple of other women prayed to Allah and helplessly stood there; ready to die. As she was about to be attacked, Sakina cursed the man who held the dreaded dagger and said, “I wish the same happens with your sisters and mother!”

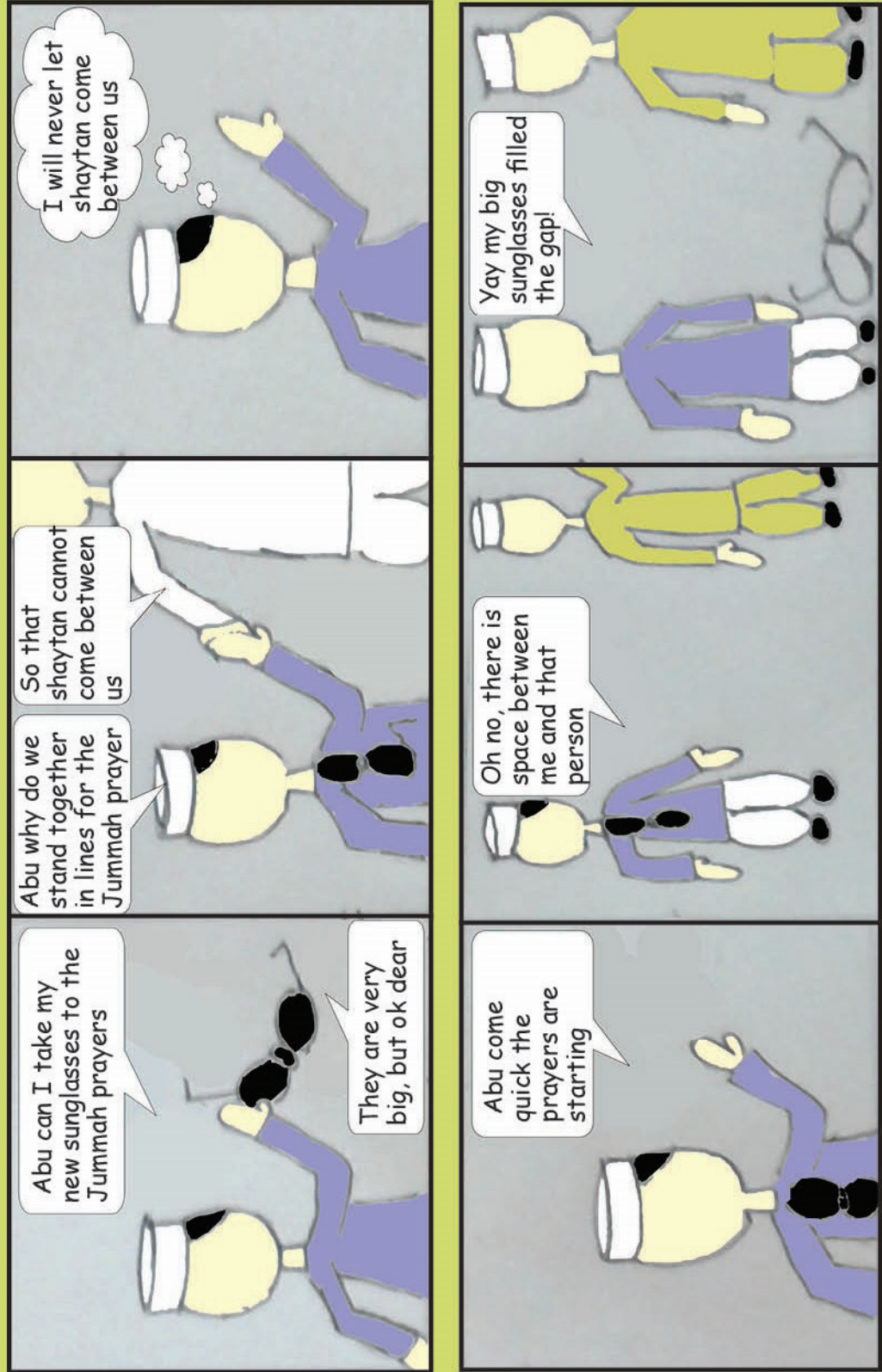
The man laughed ignoring Sakina and pounced on her.....

Suddenly a great war-cry was heard. The Muslim army had come to the rescue! The Sikhs ran away like frightened mice because it was a two to one match. Tariq was indeed a very sensible boy. He had helped to save those women and children by quietly escaping the truck while the men were ushering them all like animals. He had reached the main police station and informed Arham, who came to know about the betrayal and went to save his Muslim sisters. Later on Sakina stated that, “Death had turned back from me just by an inch.”

Now we can realise how much all Muslims sacrificed and suffered to get a free country and how boldly they faced such vicious attacks. It is incumbent upon us all to keep these memories alive and try and diminish the negativity around us and face the present problems with courage because no matter what happens, there is always a light at the end of the tunnel even if it’s just a small glimmer. We defeated these dragons of darkness before and we can beat them again...*Insha’Allah*!●

comic

Muhammad Ahmed's New Sunglasses

by Mayera Tufail

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"Allah will not show mercy to a person who does not show mercy to other people"

Islam Says 'No To Bullying'

What is Bullying and how does Islam view it?

Bullying is deliberate and hurtful behavior and can take place anywhere. There are many forms of bullying: Physical (hitting, kicking, snatching), Verbal (name-calling, insulting, taunting), Emotional (ignoring, spreading nasty gossip) and Cyber Bullying (using mobile phones, text messages, the internet).

Islam does not tolerate any form of bullying as it is a form of oppression. Allah] has mentioned many times in the Qur'aan regarding His displeasure of such actions:
"Allah does not like the oppressors." (3:140)
" O ye who believe ..... do not defame one another, nor insult one another by nicknames." (49:11)

Thus laughing at someone, defaming, being sarcastic or bullying is not acceptable.

It's not Cool to be Cruel

Ask Yourself a Question - How should we behave towards others?

The Muslim Greeting "As salamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh" (May the peace, mercy, and blessings of Allah be with you)" is made up of three beautiful terms: peace, mercy, and blessings. These terms, taken together or separately, deny any association with any form of bullying. What does 'making people miserable' have to do with "peace, mercy, and blessings"?

If you see someone being bullied, do not ignore it, report it.

The Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu aleyhe wassalam)) said: "He who amongst you sees something evil should modify it with the help of his hand; and if he has not strength enough to do it, then he should do it with his tongue, and if he has not strength enough to do it, (even) then he should (abhor it) from his heart, and that is the least of faith."

- (Sahih Muslim)

No one has the right to hurt you or make you feel bad. If you are being bullied do not tolerate it. Report it.